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9 October 2013

Mrs D Woodgate  
Headteacher  
Bolham Community Primary School  
Bolham  
Tiverton  
Devon  
EX16 7RA

Dear Mrs Woodgate

### **Requires improvement: monitoring inspection visit to Bolham Community Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 8 October 2013, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the findings of my visit. Thank you for the help you gave me and for the time you made available to discuss the actions you are taking to improve the school since the most recent section 5 inspection.

The visit was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to require improvement following the section 5 inspection in July 2013. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Senior leaders and governors are taking effective action to tackle the areas requiring improvement identified at the recent section 5 inspection. The school should take further action to:

- strengthen the work of English and mathematics subject leaders so they organise and drive through actions for improving teachers' assessments of pupils' progress
- ensure that all leaders are accountable for their work by regularly updating governors on the impact of improvement work.

### **Evidence**

During the visit, I met with you, the Chair of the Governing body and five governors, and a representative from the local authority to discuss the actions being taken to

improve the school. I looked at your action plan and documents related to this. We went on a tour of the school during lessons and playtime.

## **Main findings**

You moved quickly to lead the staff, governors and parents in agreeing a vision for the school, which underpins school improvement. Your school action plan focuses on the areas identified in the recent section 5 inspection and links well to the targeted intervention support provided by the local authority. Since the inspection a better use of teaching time in the morning has helped to focus teaching on mental arithmetic and spelling. Following observations of teaching, you give teachers helpful feedback about how they can improve their work. You are holding teachers to account more precisely for the progress of pupils in their classes. Literacy and numeracy leaders are expected to help staff improve learning in their classrooms through regularly reviewing lesson plans.

You and your English and mathematics leaders plan to improve the accuracy of teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment so that they can more accurately report on progress. Leadership would be even better if this was undertaken more regularly and with a stronger link to whole school improvements.

You have set up coaching activities, with staff from a similar sized school to help teachers improve their skills in teaching mixed age and mixed ability classrooms. The funding for a member of staff to join the authorities counting to calculating programme is adding capacity to your intervention programme for those in receipt of the pupil premium.

Governors have acted quickly to change the way they monitor and evaluate the school's work. There is a clear distinction between checking that things are being done and judging the impact of actions on improving school performance. The management plan does not reflect this awareness. You have helped the Governing Body strengthen their expertise in managing change with the recruitment of an additional governor.

Ofsted may carry out further visits and, where necessary, provide further support and challenge to the school until its next section 5 inspection.

## **External support**

You and the governors appreciate the opportunity to work on school improvement with the local authority and leaders of the Tiverton community of schools. The termly meetings with a representative from the local authority to review how quickly improvements to teaching and learning are being established provide the challenge to maintain focus on the key priorities.

I am copying this letter to the Chair of the Governing Body and the Director of Children's Services for Devon.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**